

'Latvia Is an Independent, Democratic Republic'

Following is Latvia's declaration of independence, adopted Friday:

The independent state of Latvia, founded on Nov. 18, 1918, was granted international recognition in 1920 and became a member of the League of Nations in 1921. The Latvian nation's right to self-determination was implemented in April 1920 when the people of Latvia gave their mandate to the Constituent Assembly chosen by universal, equal, direct and proportional elections. In February 1922 the Assembly adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia which is still in effect *de jure*. The ultimatum of June 16, 1940, from the Stalinist government of the U.S.S.R. to the Latvian government, and the following military aggression, occupation, annexation and the liquidation of the statehood of Latvia, constitute international crimes. The new government of Latvia was formed by the dictate of the government of the U.S.S.R. According to international law, this government did not represent the executive authority of the sovereign Republic of Latvia, since it represented the interests of the U.S.S.R. instead of those of Latvia.

The elections of June 14 and 15, 1940, to the Parliament (Saeima) of occupied Latvia, were held under conditions of political terror after an illegal and unconstitutional election law had been adopted. Of the 17 lists of candidates submitted, only one was permitted in the elections—the list of the Working People's Bloc. The pre-election platform of this bloc did not include any demand to establish Soviet power in Latvia or to join the Soviet Union. Moreover, the results of the elections were falsified. Thus, the illegally and fraudulently formed parliament did not represent the governmental system and liquidated the sovereignty of Latvia. Only the people had the right to decide on these matters, but no free referendum was held. Hence, according to international law, the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union is invalid. Thus, the Republic of Latvia continues to exist *de jure* as a subject of international law and is recognized as such by more than 50 nations of the world.

Taking into account the "Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Latvian State" adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian S.S.R. on July 28, 1989; the "Declaration on the Question of the Independence of the Latvian State," adopted by the Latvian Supreme Soviet on Feb. 15, 1990, and the Appeal of the All-Latvia Meeting of People's Deputies of April 21, 1990;

Observing the will of the inhabitants of Latvia, which was unmistakably expressed by the election of a majority of deputies to the Latvian Supreme Soviet who had expressed a determination to restore the independence of the Republic of Latvia;

Being determined to restore *de facto* the free, democratic and independent Republic of Latvia;

The Supreme Soviet of the Latvian S.S.R. decides:

1. Recognizing the supremacy of the fundamental principles of international law over national law, to consider illegal the treaty of August 23, 1939, between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, and the subsequent liquidation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Latvia on June 17, 1940, which was the result of Soviet military aggression.

2. To declare invalid from the moment of its adoption the decision by the Parliament of Latvia "On the Republic of Latvia's joining the U.S.S.R." of July 21, 1940.

3. To re-establish the authority of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia adopted by the Constituent Assembly on February 15, 1922, in the entire territory of Latvia. The official name of the Latvian state is "The Republic of Latvia," abbreviated as "Latvia."

4. Until the adoption of a revised constitution, to suspend the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, except for the articles expressing the constitutional and legal foundation of the Latvian state, which according to Article 77 of the Constitution can be changed only by popular referendum:

Article 1—Latvia is an independent, democratic republic.

Article 2—The sovereign power of the

Latvian state belongs to the people of Latvia.

Article 3—The territory of the Latvian state shall consist of Vidzeme, Latgale, Kurzeme and Zemgale, within the boundaries stipulated by international treaties.

Article 6—The Saeima is elected by universal, equal, direct and secret vote on the basis of proportional representation.

The application of Article 6 will follow the renewal of those state and administrative structures of Latvia which guarantee free elections.

5. To set a transition period for the re-establishment of the *de facto* independence of the Republic of Latvia, which will conclude with the convening of the Parliament of Latvia. During the transition period the supreme power in Latvia is held by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Latvia.

6. During the transition period, to consider it possible to preserve those constitutional and other legislative acts of the Latvian S.S.R. already in effect in Latvia at the time this Declaration is adopted, insofar as they do not contradict Articles, 1, 2, 3 and 6 of the Constitution of Latvia.

7. To form a commission for revising the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia so that it corresponds to the present political, economic and social situation in Latvia.

8. To guarantee citizens of the Republic of Latvia and those of other nations permanently residing in Latvia social, economic and cultural rights and political freedoms which are consistent with universally recognized international standards of human rights. This is fully applicable to those citizens of the U.S.S.R. who express the desire to continue living in the territory of Latvia.

9. To develop relations between Latvia and the U.S.S.R. in accordance with the Peace Treaty between Latvia and Russia of August 11, 1920, which is still in force and which recognizes the independence of Latvia for all time. To establish a Government Commission for conducting negotiations with the U.S.S.R.

This act takes effect from the moment of its adoption.